POLICY NUMBER: A-003
APPROVAL DATE: 01/12/2010
EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/12/2010

TITLE: VAPHS Animal Research Facility Importation of Rodents from Non-Standard Commercial Facilities

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Describe the requirements necessary for requesting rodents from non-standard commercial facilities
- Describe the rodent pathogens which are excluded from this institution

2.0 REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision #	Change	Reference Section(s)
December 17, 2009	N/A	New Policy	

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all VAPHS and Veterans Research Foundation employees (including those with WOC appointments) working with rodents within the VAPHS Animal Research Facility (ARF).

4.0 POLICY

Rodents may be imported into the VAPHS Animal Research Facility provided that the procedures outlined in Section 5.0 are followed.

5.0 PROCEDURE

5.1 Shipping Application:

To initiate the import process, the receiving Principal Investigator is required to submit a completed Rodent Import Application form to the Animal Research Facility Supervisor using the ARF email address VHAPTHARF@va.gov. Rodents will only be imported if the animals are described in the IACUC-approved ACORP. If the animals are not described in the ACORP, the Principal Investigator must submit an amendment to the IACUC and the amendment must be approved before the animals will be imported.

5.2 Health and Facility Status:

The health requirements for importation of animals into the Pittsburgh VA Healthcare System Animal Research Facility are that the sending facility[1] in its entirety must be free of all pathogens that are currently excluded from our rodent colonies for at least the previous nine months. This must be documented by no less than three negative (quarterly) sentinel health test reports in that time period. The most recent of these results should have been performed within 30 days of export. If these requirements cannot be met then direct importation of rodents will not be allowed and alternate methods of animal procurement (e.g. embryo transfer re-derivation) will be necessary.

In addition to the required nine months of negative sentinel health reports specified above, the health status of the entire facility from where the rodents are to be exported should be provided (again

[1] A facility is loosely defined as a collective set of rooms, corridors or floors housing animals integral to a specific building. The term is subject to considerable professional judgment that may either expand or restrict this definition, factoring in matters such as the shared use of cage wash systems, procedural space and animal husbandry personnel as well as general trafficking patterns and other criteria.

through serial QC sentinel health reports) for at least 18 months prior to export. Details concerning how any infectious processes that may have occurred during the period between months 10-18 should be described along with how these diseases were mitigated. If the animals in question have been relocated during this time period of 18 months, the health history should include both the current and previous housing locations. The Principal Investigator is responsible for getting the reports from the facility from which the animals will be exported. The report must be sent to the ARF supervisor and the VAPHS R&D Administrative Officer. The veterinarian, at his/her discretion, may choose to discuss the report at the IACUC meeting or may consult the IACUC Chair before approval for the import is granted.

a. Excluded pathogens at this institution are as follows:

(1) Mice: SEND (Sendai virus), PVM (Pneumonia virus of mice), MHV (Mouse hepatitis virus), MVM (Minute virus of mice), MPV (Mouse parvovirus), TMEV (Mouse polio virus), REO (Reovirus), MPUL (*Mycoplasma pulmonis*), EDIM (Epizootic Diarrhea of Infant Mice), LCMV (Lymphocytic Choriomeningitis Virus), MAV (Mouse adenovirus FL/K87), ECTRO (Ectromelia virus), K (Mouse pneumonitis virus), POLY (Polyoma virus), MTLV (Mouse Thymic virus), MCMV (Mouse cytomegalovirus), HANT (Hantaan virus), ECUN (*Encephalitozoon cuniculi)*, CARB (Cilia-associated respiratory bacillus), pinworms of the Genera *Aspiculuris* and *Syphacia*, and ectoparasites.

Helicobacter infection is not necessarily an exclusionary factor for importation (depending on the nature of the research study in question and direct concerns of the PI doing the importing), however, the Helicobacter status of the animals in question must be determined and reported prior to the shipment.

(2) Rats: SEND, PVM, RCV/SDA (Rat coronavirus/Sialodacryoadenitis), RV (Kilham rat virus), H-1 (Toolan's H-1 virus), TMEV, REO, MPUL, LCMV, HANT, MAV, ECUN, CARB, RPV (Rat parvovirus), REV (Rat Enterovirus), pinworms of the General Aspiculuris and Syphacia, and ectoparasites.

(3) Hamsters: SEND, PVM, REO, LCMV, ECUN, SV-5 (Simian virus 5), PI-3 (Parainfluenza virus 3), pinworms of the Genera *Aspiculuris* and *Syphacia*, and ectoparasites.

5.3 Animal Identification:
All animals must have a means of permanent identification, such as: ear tag, ear notch, toe clip, tattoo, or microchip. An ID code must be included with the shipment.

5.4 Strain:
The strain name must be given in its entirety (for example, C57BL/6-Tg (ACTbEGFP) 10sb/J should not be abbreviated to C57BL) to prevent identification errors.

5.5 Breeding Pairs and Male Rodents:
Males and females sent as breeding pairs must be shipped in separate shipping boxes or shipping box compartments to prevent breeding in transit. With the exception of litter mates, males should be shipped separately to prevent fighting during shipment.

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